

April 27, 2016

Nicole Chanchalashvili

Great Neck, NY

Honorable Colleen McMahon
United States District Judge
Southern District of New York
United States Courthouse
500 Pearl Street
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge McMahon,

My name is Nicole Chanchalashvili and I am Moshe Mirilashvili's youngest granddaughter. I am 18 years old and I am finishing my senior year at Great Neck North High School. Your Honor, I am writing this letter to tell you about my grandfather, who I like to call Mikey. I know you are the only one who can help him.

Mikey has been in my life since the day I was born, and he has always been there for me. He is not only my grandfather; he is my biggest cheerleader and my best friend. In times of sadness, I turn to Mikey. When I feel confused, I call Mikey for advice. In times of success, there is no one I'd rather share the news with than Mikey. He is my shoulder to cry on and my rock. He taught me many things in my life, the most important thing he taught me was to always be strong.

I'd like to share a story with you.

I struggled my whole life in school because of my . My grandfather would pick me up from school or call me after school everyday, just to remind me not to give up. He was the only person in my life who actually took the time to always give me positive encouragement. He would remind me not to complain, and remind me that people in the world

suffer from many different kinds of pain. I wanted to give up so badly. Passing a quiz was so difficult. Mikey was always concerned about my New York State Regents Exams. He encouraged me to seek extra help, talk to teachers for help, and ask questions in class. He would make sure I always studied. Without passing my state exams, I would not get a high school diploma and I would not be able to go to college. A few months ago, I passed all my exams. His smile was so big. I felt so accomplished. When he saw me preparing for college applications, he told me that it was his greatest happiness. I would have never even dreamed about going to college if it wasn't for Mikey's encouragement and advice.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I made it to my goal, but Mikey still reminds me to always do my exercises. He tells me that even when you reach your goals, you still have to keep working to maintain those goals. Mikey always talked to me about being strong and never giving up, and being a fighter. And that's exactly what I did.

My busy schedule left very little time for birthday parties and hanging out. Before my school day I would meet with a private tutor and therapist, and after school I would commute to the city for doctor's appointments and [REDACTED] exercise classes. Little by little, my grades were improving and my back got straighter. He always rooted for me. He believed in me when I did not believe in my self, and that meant the world to me.

Mikey would always tell me: "Nicole, you are not disabled. You are *able* to do anything and everything you set your heart to." With these words, I learned the importance of discipline and hard work.

When Mikey was convicted and taken to jail, he would call us everyday and ask if I heard back from any colleges yet. A few days after the conviction, I got my first college acceptance letter. I couldn't wait to tell Mikey that I got into college, he was the first person I wanted to tell. We told him, and he was crying from happiness. He told me that this news gave him the strength to be strong in jail.

Your honor, thank you for listening to my personal story. I am begging you from the bottom of my heart to have mercy on my grandfather. Please be lenient on my best friend. I am devastated that he won't be at my high school graduation this June, but I pray that he will be with me at my college graduation. As I said before, there is no one I'd rather share my success with than my grandfather. I need him. I miss him so much. Thank you so much for reading this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Nicole", followed by a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line that extends to the right.

Nicole Chanchalashvili